

Message Text

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E.O.11652: NA
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SUBJECT: HISTORICAL POLEMICS OVER TRANSYLVANIA

REF: (A) BUCHAREST 952 (B) BUDAPEST 583

1. WE DO NOT AGREE WITH THE CONCLUSION OF EITHER MANY OR MOST ROMANIANS (PARAS 1 AND 5 OF BUCHAREST 952) THAT THE PUBLICATION IN THE HUNGARIAN PRESS OF ARTICLES CONCERNING THE SITUATION OF THE HUNGARIAN MINORITY IN ROMANIA SIGNIFIES A HUNGARIAN GOVERNMENT CAMPAIGN ON THIS ISSUE. WE DO AGREE WITH THE OBSERVATION OF EMBASSY BUCHAREST THAT SURFACING OF THIS ISSUE CAN ONLY HARM HUNGARIAN-ROMANIAN RELATIONS.

2. THE ANTAL BARTHA ARTICLE ON TRANSYLVANIAN HISTORY, WHICH PROVOKED A ROMANIAN REPLY REPORTED BY EMBASSY BUCHAREST, WAS A RATHER PEDESTRIAN TREATMENT OF A CONTROVERSIAL SUBJECT.

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IT WAS BURIED ON PAGE 15 OF A SPECIAL 24-PAGE CHRISTMAS ISSUE OF MAGYAR HIRLAP. WHILE IT CONTAINED A HISTORICAL PERCEPTION OF EARLY TRANSYLVANIA WHICH IS CERTAINLY NOT CONCURRED IN BY ROMANIAN HISTORIANS, IT IS A PERCEPTION WHICH IS WIDELY SHARED BY HUNGARIAN HISTORIANS. THE FACT THAT THE TWO COUNTRIES' ACADEMICIANS DO NOT AGREE ON THE HISTORY OF TRANSYLVANIA IS

NOTHING NEW.

3. THE TWO ARTICLES BY ILLYES REPORTED IN BUDAPEST 559 ON MINORITY PROBLEMS IN EASTERN EUROPE ARE A MORE IMPORTANT STATEMENT OF CONCERN BY A LEADING HUNGARIAN CULTURAL FIGURE OVER THE SITUATION OF THE HUNGARIAN MINORITY IN ROMANIA. IT WILL BE INTERESTING TO SEE IF THE ROMANIANS CHOOSE TO REACT TO THESE ARTICLES ALSO.

4. IT IS POSSIBLE THAT THE HUNGARIAN GOVERNMENT AND PARTY HAVE ALLOWED PUBLICATION OF THESE ARTICLES IN ORDER TO REGISTER SOME DISSATISFACTION OVER THE STATE OF HUNGARIAN-ROMANIAN RELATIONS, INCLUDING THE EMOTIONAL ISSUE OF THE HUNGARIAN MINORITY. IT IS NOTABLE THAT NEITHER THE PARTY NOR THE GOVERNMENT HAS MADE A STATEMENT ON THE MINORITY PROBLEM SPECIFICALLY RELATED TO ROMANIA. WE BELIEVE THAT PUBLICATION OF THE ARTICLES REFLECTS MORE THE DESIRE BY KADAR TO BE RESPONSIVE TO PUBLIC CONCERN OVER TRANSYLVANIA THAN AN ATTEMPT TO CREATE DIFFICULTIES FOR CEAUSESCU. THAT THIS CONCERN EXISTS, AND THAT THE HUNGARIAN REGIME FEELS THAT IT MUST REMAIN INTERESTED IN THE FATE OF THE HUNGARIAN MINORITY, ARE EVIDENT. WE CONTINUE TO BELIEVE THAT KADAR WILL MOVE CAUTIOUSLY.
KAISER

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